

Kentucky Pandemic Influenza Operations Plan July 2008

A large, stylized white silhouette of a horse's head, facing right, is positioned behind the title text. The silhouette is composed of several overlapping, flowing shapes that suggest the horse's mane and the contours of its face.

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Commissioner for Public Health

Cabinet for Health and Family Services
Department for Public Health
Division of Epidemiology and Health Planning

Kentucky 
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Kentucky Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is not a question of if but when another influenza pandemic will occur. Kentucky must be prepared for this and other types of public health emergencies. To lessen the impact of an influenza pandemic, the Kentucky Department for Public Health has created the Kentucky Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan to promote an effective response throughout the pandemic. The plan was originally drafted in 2002 but is being updated through a coordinated effort of the Kentucky Department for Public Health (KDPH), Kentucky Division of Emergency Management (KYEM), Kentucky Office of Homeland Security (KOHS), Kentucky Department of Education (KDE), Kentucky Department of Agriculture (KDA), Kentucky Department of Criminal Justice Training (DOCJT), Kentucky State Police (KSP), Chamber of Commerce, universities, local health departments and other partners and stakeholders. The plan is considered a “living document” and will be updated with changes as needed.

Some of the most diverse areas within the United States are in Kentucky. The state ranges from the Eastern Coal Fields, a rugged mountainous region to the gently rolling central part of the state, the Bluegrass Region, to the Western Coal Fields. Kentucky’s health and medical community has been divided among the 14 Health Resource Service Administration (HRSA) planning regions. Each region has its unique planning considerations, culture and players. Even though Kentucky has over four million residents and is geographically and culturally diverse, it is a tightly knit state. Public health has built strong relationships with preparedness partners and stakeholders and knows this will go far in response to nature’s “pop quizzes”. Understanding and appropriately addressing these facets will allow Kentucky to be as prepared as possible for a public health emergency such as an influenza pandemic.

While a successful pandemic response is dependent on public health response, many agencies, organizations, and private institutions will need to work in a coordinated and collaborative manner to ensure an effective overall response in Kentucky. Some key players and planning activities include:

- KDPH as the lead agency for preparedness and response to an influenza pandemic in Kentucky.
- Local health departments are critical to planning and response as all disasters and emergencies are local.
- Emergency Management and Homeland Security will be important for ensuring overall coordination of government resources.
- First responder agencies have important manpower and logistical resources that will be necessary for ensuring the safety of individuals and communities.
- Hospitals and healthcare institutions will be the frontline of a pandemic and are essential planning partners at the local and state level.
- Volunteer agencies serving as important partners in emergency response activities.
- Businesses and schools will need to collaborate and coordinate with public health to help limit the spread of disease.

These entities have been critical to the development of the plan, and are encouraged to develop their own influenza pandemic response plans that coordinate with the Kentucky Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan. Kentucky Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan will become an integral part of the Kentucky Emergency Operations Plan.

The United States Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has incorporated the World Health Organization's (WHO) Pandemic Planning Periods and Phases into its influenza pandemic response plan. In keeping with the national model, the Kentucky Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan identifies responsible parties and prescribes necessary actions, based on the WHO/HHS pandemic periods.

The heart of the Kentucky Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan is the Response Activity Supplements section, which addresses the concepts listed below. These supplements are subject-area specific and provide very detailed planning and response activities for both state and local health departments. The supplements include:

- *Laboratory and Surveillance* - The capability of identifying pandemic influenza viruses depends not only on rapid detection and characterization, but also on strong partnerships between clinical and public health laboratories. This supplement provides guidance to stakeholders such as health care providers that serve as sentinel sites for reporting, local health department surveillance contacts and health care providers who voluntarily submit specimens to the state laboratory.
- *Healthcare Coordination and Planning* - The healthcare system in Kentucky will experience significant strains on its resources during a pandemic. Preparedness for this area includes surge capacity, mortuary issues, data collection, and mental health concerns. This supplement provides detailed guidance to healthcare agencies on pandemic influenza coordination and planning.
- *Infection Control* - Because a vaccine may not yet be widely available and the supply of antiviral drugs may be limited, infection control will be an important strategy. The Infection Control Supplement provides guidance to healthcare and public health partners on basic principles of infection control for limiting the spread of pandemic influenza.
- *Clinical Guidelines* - Early identification and appropriate medical intervention are essential for patients who present with suspect pandemic influenza symptoms. The Clinical Guidelines supplement provides recommendations on the initial screening, assessment and management of patients who present from the community with fever and/or respiratory symptoms during the pandemic phases.
- *Vaccine and Antiviral Distribution and Use* – During a pandemic, antiviral drugs may or not be effective or available for all. Vaccine is unlikely to be available, especially early in a pandemic. The Antiviral Supplement provides

recommendations to state and local partners on the distribution and use of antiviral drugs for treatment and prophylaxis during and influenza pandemic.

- *Community Mitigation* - Public health interventions, such as quarantine and social distancing, will be necessary during a pandemic to slow the transmission of disease in the community.
- *Public Health Communications and Training* - Providing accurate and timely coordinated messages during a pandemic will be critical to successful control and response. This supplement provides guidance on internal communications, communication with stakeholders and partners, and risk communication for the public.
- *Psychosocial Considerations* - Response agencies and organizations need to ensure the safety and well being of response personnel to ensure sustained and effective response. This supplement addresses the all-hazards approach that the Kentucky Community Crisis Response Board (KCCRB) will take in response to situations as they relate to the psychological and behavioral health.

The Kentucky Pandemic Influenza Preparedness Plan serves as a guide for the state during the various pandemic phases. The goal of this plan is to prevent illness and death and preserve critical community infrastructures. The potential impact of a pandemic could be both medical and economic. It is important to respect the potential impact a pandemic poses to all parts of society. Because Mother Nature does not aim, all citizens of the Commonwealth are at risk during a pandemic. The Kentucky Department for Public Health serves as the lead in this type of event, but it will require coordination and collaboration with many state and community partners to effectively manage a pandemic. In order to adequately prepare, the Kentucky Department for Public Health encourages all sectors to participate in planning, exercising, and responding to pandemic influenza.